The goal of this course is to introduce you to the beliefs and practices of a number of different religions. We will approach each tradition impartially, studying its beliefs concerning divinity/ies, the universe, the place and obligations of human beings within that universe, the afterlife, and how these beliefs are represented in cultural artifacts – poetry, statues, temples. We will consider how the beliefs developed and how they are incorporated into the lives of those who hold them. We will examine the religions we study from an objective, academic perspective, while at the same time trying to understand what the world looks like to a member of a given faith and how this world-view influences his or her way of life.

You will learn about how people from many different cultures look at the world. You will learn to think critically about religious materials by analyzing written and visual primary sources in order to determine the underlying presuppositions, beliefs and attitudes of those who narrate, produce, or appear in them.

This course will fulfill the following General Education Student Learning Outcomes in the Humanities:

**SLO Outcome 1:** Students analyze how ideas are represented, interpreted or valued in various expressions of human culture.

**SLO Outcome 2:** Students examine relevant primary source materials as understood by the discipline and interpret the material in writing assignments.

These learning outcomes will be assessed in the assignment Short Essay: Epic of Gilgamesh which counts for 3% of your grade.

Required text:

We will also read some of the following, which are on OAKS. To find out which ones and when they are due, come to class!

HARD COPY OF THESE READINGS IS ALSO ON RESERVE, and there are xerox machines in the library. Malfunctioning computer equipment is not an adequate excuse for not doing assigned readings.

- Mohenjo-Daro
- The Vision of Krishna's Totality
- Symbolic Heat
- Marriage in Tamil Culture
- Buddhist Readings
Confucian Readings
Taoist Readings
Daoism
The Kitchen God’s Wife
Earth God
White Flat Mountain
Uruk
The Epic of Gilgamesh
Tanakh
Growing up Jewish in Iowa
The Temple
Contemporary Jewish Views on Messianism
Christian Quotes
Seen From Outside

We will view some of the following videos (and perhaps others) in class. If you miss them, you can watch them in the library. More detailed information will be provided as the date approaches.

Hinduism: 330 million gods (Long Search series)
Symbolic Heat
Buddhism: Footprints of the Buddha (Long Search Series)
Taoism (1473)
Taoism: A Question of Balance (Long Search Series)
The Bible’s Buried Secrets
Protestant Christianity (Long Search Series)
Inside Mecca

There will be occasional on-line readings, announced as the semester progresses. Usually these will be optional.

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80</td>
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<td>C+</td>
<td>77</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading is cumulative - you can calculate the grade you have earned to date by adding up the points you have received so far and comparing the total to the grading scale. For privacy and security reasons, I do not convey information about student grades by email.

Your grade will be based on:

- **2 Hour Exams**, 24 points each. **Exams are essay exams.**
- **Final Exam** (not cumulative: this is the third hour exam), 24 points.

- **Cumulative Essay**, 18 points. This essay is to be typed, double spaced, at least five and no more than seven full pages plus a cover sheet and works cited page (if needed). The essay topic will be given no later than Nov. 15, and the essay will be due Nov. 25 (though of course I will accept them earlier)! This essay will not be a research essay; rather, it will require you to go back and think over what you have studied so far, using all the different kinds of sources to write your answer. Detailed instructions and a rubric will be provided. Wikipedia will be useless!

- **Short Essays** 10 points. I will announce the topic of these essays during the class before which they are due. The essays focus on the OAKS readings, and are not meant to be literary masterpieces. Don’t spend time on an elaborate introduction; get to the point of the question asked. They should be 1-2 pages long unless I tell you otherwise. They must be typed (double spaced) and stapled (better yet, print them double sided to save paper). Do not use a special header: just your name, RELS 105, and my name in a single line at the top of the page. These are due AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS, whether I collect them at that time or not. If you have a genuine computer or printer problem and deposit the essay in OAKS BEFORE CLASS STARTS I will accept this as evidence that you have written the essay, but I STILL WANT HARD COPY WITHIN 48 HOURS IN ORDER TO GET CREDIT FOR IT. Note that there is a computer and printer in the religious studies lounge just outside my office and you can print out your essay there, BEFORE class please! These assignments are intended to be the basis of class discussion: they CANNOT BE MADE UP. However, since there are about ten opportunities, if you miss one you can do the next one. They are worth 2 points per assignment, so if you get a full 2 points on the first five assignments you are done (or can do more for extra credit). They grades are additive: if you get 1.5 points on 4 assignments, that is the equivalent of getting 2 points on three assignments. You will not receive detailed comments on these assignments: it is up to you to attend class and make notes on the discussion that takes place in the classroom, correcting any errors or misunderstandings in your notes (you can make notes on the paper itself if you want to, just so I can see what you originally wrote.) You are responsible for doing the readings whether or not you write the short essay.

ONE of these essays, on the Epic of Gilgamesh, is MANDATORY. It is also worth an extra point!

- **Extra Credit**: You may earn up to three extra points by doing more than the required number of short essays OR by attending special events and handing in your notes. Guest lectures are events that I cannot predict in advance; it often happens that a speaker comes to campus and addresses a topic that is relevant to the course. If this happens, I will let you know. These activities do not necessarily happen at a time you can attend – that’s why they are EXTRA credit. You can also earn extra credit by doing more than the minimum number of short essays; the total number of points acquired through short essays plus extra credit cannot exceed 13, of which at least 10 must be from short essays.

**Disabilities**: If you have a disability that qualifies you for special accommodation, please present a letter to me from the Center for Disability Services (SNAP) at the beginning of the semester. Although you are under no obligation to do so, if you have any special needs that may affect your work in my class (for example if your native language is not English, or if you regularly run out of time on essay exams) please let me know.
If you need special accommodation through the SNAP program or for ANY other reason, please discuss the matter with me AT LEAST A WEEK before an exam is scheduled or the assignment is due. In particular, SNAP students are responsible for getting the necessary paperwork to me a week in advance of scheduled exams.

Computers. If you use your computer to take notes, sit in the back row (and be in class on time!) Computers may be used for note taking ONLY. Use of your computer for any other purpose will result in it being forbidden from the class in future. I may periodically call on computer users and ask to see their notes, either during or after class. If I am not satisfied with the quality of the notes, you may be prohibited from using a computer in future. If the notes are really excellent, I may ask you to share with those who have legitimate absences.

Tape recorders If you wish to record the lecture, you may leave your tape recorder (not video recorder) on the front desk. You are nonetheless expected to be present in class. This option is for those who have trouble listening to the lecture and taking notes at the same time. You should take notes from the recording after class. You may be asked to share your recordings with others.

Cell phones must be turned off and put away (in pocket, purse, bookbag, etc.) before you enter the class. Wearing headphones or equivalent in class is forbidden. Use of all other electronic devices in class is forbidden.

Missed classes / exams: I assume all class members are adults and able to manage their time in such a way as to be in their seats when class starts. Arriving more than ten minutes late to class counts as an absence. Read the syllabus for exam dates and – if your parents are buying you airline tickets – make sure they know when your exams are so that the tickets are purchased AFTER ALL your exams are over. If you anticipate a conflict, for any reason, it is far better to deal with the problem BEFORE it arises than afterwards. I am always willing to work with a student who plans ahead to arrange make up (or make–before) exams. If you miss an exam you receive an automatic F (zero points) until a make-up exam has been arranged. An F for not completing required work (all 3 exams and the cumulative essay) means an F for the course. Failing to do short essays simply means you get a letter grade lower than otherwise.

College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.
Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The F is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php

**** IMPORTANT MESSAGES! ****
Always identify your course name AND MEETING TIME in email messages to me. DO NOT write your SS number or student ID on any assignment for this course.

When you have a question, or if I talk too fast, RAISE YOUR HAND AND LET ME KNOW! Other class members will undoubtedly be glad that you did so. There is no point in being in the class if you don't understand what is going on.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST: YOUR HEALTH MATTERS! Exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep . . . Get a thermometer and learn how to use it! If you are sick, go to the health services; they will send a note to all your professors. DON’T come to class and infect your classmates! Remember to cough or sneeze into a tissue (or your elbow), don’t get so close to anyone that they can breathe on your face (and vice versa), WASH AND DRY your hands frequently and keep them away from your face.

SCHEDULE

The following list of readings is provisional. We may go a bit faster or slower, depending on student interest in different topics. **SPECIFIC DETAILS OF FILMS AND SHORT ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS AND ON OAKS. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDING CLASS AND GETTING THIS INFORMATION.**
YOUR ESSAY MUST BE HANDED IN, OR DEPOSITED ON OAKS, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS AND IT MUST ADDRESS THE TOPIC ANNOUNCED IN CLASS IN ORDER FOR YOU TO GET CREDIT FOR THE ASSIGNMENT. Even if deposited on OAKS, you must give me hard copy within 48 hours in order to get credit for the assignment. NOTE: the schedule omits a number of ‘smaller’ religions such as Jainism, Sikhism, and Shinto. If it turns out that the class progresses faster than expected, we may be able to include some of these.

In the interest of flexibility, the syllabus is arranged by weeks, not days.

Aug. 28: READ THIS SYLLABUS and IWR ch. 1. Optional: Mohenjo-Daro’s New Story (on OAKS)

It’s a good idea to read the assigned chapter on the weekend, once through, like a novel – so, this weekend, read IWR chapter 4. During the week, review the chapter focussing on the topics that are discussed in class and taking notes on those topics. (Obviously you should be taking notes in class as well!) If you perceive a discrepancy between the text and the lectures, raise the issue at once! Note that not everything in every chapter will be discussed in class, but you will need to know the other material for your cumulative essay at the end of the course.

Week of Aug. 31 IWR ch. 4. Friday: read Symbolic Heat on OAKS. DROP ADD DEADLINE

Week of Sept. 7: IWR ch. 4
   Short Essay: “The Vision of Krishna’s Totality” due WEDNESDAY
   Friday: Symbolic Heat, OAKS

Week of Sept. 14 ff. IWR ch 5  FRIDAY SHORT ESSAY: Buddhist Readings

Week of Sept 21 ff.  IWR ch 5

Week of Sept 28 ff.  EXAM WED SEPT. 30

   SHORT ESSAY FRIDAY (topic TBA)

Week Oct 5  IWR ch 8  Daoism (and perhaps other reading) on OAKS.

Week of Oct 12 Ancient Near Eastern Religions. For MONDAY: OAKS or on-line reading on URUK  NOTE: from now on electronic readings become extremely important, often more so than the textbook, and it is essential to attend class both for lectures and analysis of short essays.

for WEDNESDAY: MANDATORY SHORT ESSAY on the EPIC OF GILGAMESH. worth 3 points instead of 2.
FRIDAY: SHORT ESSAY ON “Tanakh: Genesis”
FALL BREAK OCT 19.

WEDNESDAY: SHORT ESSAY: “Tanakh, Exodus”

Oct. 26 ff. IWR Chapter 10
SHORT ESSAY: due FRIDAY Passover Haggadah

OCT 29 IS THE LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM THIS COURSE WITH A GRADE OF W

Week of Nov 2. IWR ch. 10 OAKS: Contemporary Jewish Views on Messianism (reading, no assignment) EXAM FRIDAY NOV. 6

Week of Nov 9 IWR ch. 10-11 MONDAY: SHORT ESSAY on gospels.

Week of Nov. 16 IWR chap. 11

Week of Nov. 18 finish IWR chap. 11 start IWR ch. 12

Week of Nov. 23 IWR ch. 12 Thanksgiving vacation Nov 25 CUMULATIVE ESSAY DUE NOV 24 by 4 PM.

Week of Nov. 30 IWR ch. 12
Dec. 2 SHORT ESSAY “Seen from the Outside”

Dec. 7. Last day of classes. Review for final.

Dec. 8 Reading Day. Absolutely final extension date for cumulative essays.

The final hour exam will take place during the period scheduled for the final exam. For date, see the College’s exam schedule. However, since this is an hour exam, not a final, IT WILL BEGIN AT 9 AM.
If you sign the following and put it IN MY MAILBOX by 4 PM Sept. 1, you will receive 1 EXTRA CREDIT POINT.

I have read the above syllabus, and understand that it will be necessary to study hard on a regular basis (2 hours for each class period) if I want to do well in this course, which requires the memorization of foreign language terms. I understand that the exams will be essay exams, and that I am responsible for doing all ER readings before the class period at which they are assigned.

I have read, and promise to abide by, the Honor Code of the College of Charleston.

I will keep a backup copy of any assignments I hand in.

I will regularly check my CofC email account.

Signed,

phone number:

THIS INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER, SO THAT I CAN CONTACT YOU IF NECESSARY. IT WILL THEN BE DESTROYED.